

Amendments to the Claims

Please amend the claims, without prejudice, as follows, where underlining identifies added material and strikethroughs identify deleted material:

1-31. (Cancelled).

32. (Currently Amended) A wheeled structure, comprising:

a body having at least first and second side portions;

a first end wheel element, an intermediate wheel element, and a second sets-of end wheel element[s] rotatably attached to the first and second side portions, respectively, the intermediate wheel element having a wider track than the first end wheel element and the second end wheel element;

a tail element pivotally coupled to a portion of the body, the tail element being pivotally coupled to a portion of the body via an articulation element; and

a drive module coupled to the tail element to control the movement of the tail element between a first, stowed position and a second position where said tail element can make selective contact with a level ground plane,

wherein ~~each~~ the first end, intermediate, and second end set-of wheel elements is are arrayed with a selected degree of rocker of the wheel elements coupled to the body, to enable the wheeled structure to turn-in-place, wherein the intermediate wheel element is configured to contact the level ground plane, and the first and second end wheel elements are configured to selectively contact or be adjacent to the level ground plane.

33-38. (Cancelled).

39. (Previously Presented) The wheeled structure of claim 32, wherein the articulation element is a hinge.

40. (Previously Presented) The wheeled structure of claim 32 wherein the articulation element is a pivot.

41. (Previously Presented) The wheeled structure of claim 32, wherein the articulation element is a flexible body portion.

42-53. (Cancelled).

54. (Previously Presented) The wheeled structure of claim 32, wherein there is no overlap between adjacent wheel elements of the first and second sets of wheel elements.

55. (Original) The wheeled structure of claim 54, wherein the wheel elements of the first and second sets of wheel elements, respectively, are aligned in a row.

56. (Cancelled).

57. (New) The wheeled structure of claim 32, wherein the tail is curved.

58. (New) The wheeled structure of claim 32, wherein when the tail is articulated furthest forward with respect to the base, the tail is long enough to contact a stairway step forward of the first end wheel element.

59. (New) The wheeled structure of claim 32, wherein the tail is configured to contact a first step of a stairway and lift the first end wheel element to attain the first step.

60. (New) The wheeled structure of claim 32, wherein the body has a profile in a plane disposed between the first and second sides and the tail substantially conforms to the body profile when in the first, stowed position.

61. (New) The wheeled structure of claim 60, wherein the plane is parallel to the first and second sides.

62. (New) The wheeled structure of claim 60, wherein the plane is centered between the first and second sides.

63. (New) A wheeled structure, comprising:

a body having at least first and second side portions and having a profile in a center plane;

first and second sets of wheel elements rotatably attached to the first and second side portions, respectively;

a tail element pivotally coupled to a portion of the body, the tail element being pivotally coupled to a portion of the body via an articulation element and substantially conforming to the body profile when in a stowed position; and

a drive module coupled to the tail element to control the movement of the tail element between a first, stowed position and a second position where said tail element can make selective contact with a ground plane, wherein the drive module controls the angle and position of the tail element relative to the body.

64. (New) The wheeled structure of claim 63, wherein the articulation element is a hinge.

65. (New) The wheeled structure of claim 63, wherein the articulation element is a pivot.

66. (New) The wheeled structure of claim 63, wherein the articulation element is a flexible body portion.

67. (New) The wheeled structure of claim 63, wherein there is no overlap between adjacent wheel elements of the first and second sets of wheel elements.

68. (New) The wheeled structure of claim 67, wherein the wheel elements of the first and second sets of wheel elements, respectively, are aligned in a row.

69. (New) The wheeled structure of claim 68, wherein each of the first and second sets of wheel elements is comprised of at least a first end wheel element, an intermediate wheel element, and a second end wheel element, and wherein the intermediate wheel element is configured to contact the ground plane, and the first and second end wheel elements are configured to selectively contact or be adjacent to the ground plane.

70. (New) The wheeled structure of claim 69, wherein the intermediate wheel element has a wider track than the first end wheel element and the second

71. (New) The wheeled structure of claim 63, wherein when the tail is articulated furthest forward with respect to the base, the tail is long enough to contact a step forward of the first end wheel element.

72. (New) The wheeled structure of claim 63, wherein the tail is configured to contact a first step of a stairway and lift the first end wheel element to attain the first step.

73. (New) The wheeled structure of claim 63, wherein the tail, when in the stowed position, is disposed substantially entirely within a profile defined by a plane substantially tangent to the top of the front and rear wheels and within a perimeter defined by the front and rear wheels.

74. (New) A wheeled structure, comprising:
a body having at least first and second side portions;
a first end wheel element, an intermediate wheel element, and a second end wheel element rotatably attached to the first and second side portions, respectively, the intermediate wheel element having a wider track than the first end wheel element and the second end wheel element;

wherein each first end, intermediate, and second end wheel elements is arrayed with a selected degree of rocker of the wheel elements coupled to the body, wherein the intermediate wheel element is always in contact with the level ground plane, and the first and second end wheel elements are selectively in contact with or adjacent to the level ground plane to enable the wheeled structure to turn-in-place, enhance stability, and to reduce friction losses on smooth terrain.

75. (New) The wheeled structure of claim 74, wherein the intermediate wheel element has a wider track than the first end wheel element and the second

76. (New) The wheeled structure of claim 74 further comprising:

a tail element pivotally coupled to a portion of the body, the tail element being pivotally coupled to a portion of the body via an articulation element and substantially conforming to the body profile when in a stowed position; and

a drive module coupled to the tail element to control the movement of the tail element between a first, stowed position and a second position where said tail element can make selective contact with a ground plane, wherein the drive module controls the angle and position of the tail element relative to the body.